

A+ COLLEGE READY

A Division of the A+ Education Partnership

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June 16, 2011

Chairman Julius Genachowski
Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Commissioner Robert M. McDowell
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW Washington, DC 20554

Re: GN Docket 11-65

Dear Chairman Genachowski and Commissioners:

A+ College Ready was formed in 2008 as a division of The A+ Education Partnership of Alabama. We are dedicated to improving overall student achievement in math, science, and English. We do this by working to dramatically increase the number of students taking AP courses, earning qualifying scores on AP exams, and preparing for and succeeding in college.

After just one year in the A+ College Ready program, 23 high schools in 5 districts showed a dramatic 106% increase in passing AP math, science, and English (MSE) scores, which is 16 times the national average of 6.6%. The results propelled Alabama to have the highest increase in passing MSE scores in the country. Since then we have added about 41 more schools and expect similar impressive test score improvements. Going forward it will be important to offer these benefits to students all across the state.

If we are to do that it will be critical that students have the greatest access to quality high-speed broadband service both at school and in their communities. In Alabama we often see the rural areas with the greatest needs are also those with the least access to technology. That is something that we can and must change. If our young people are to maintain a competitive advantage in today's fast pace global market, they will need access to high-speed broadband and the services and applications it offers.

That potential opportunity for our youth is why I support the merger of AT&T and T-Mobile. The promise of extending high-speed wireless broadband access to an additional 55 million people around the country is one we cannot afford to let slip away. To continue the great progress we are making we need to keep pushing broadband access out to our students who need it most. AT&T has demonstrated an ability and willingness to increase the coverage of faster, more reliable wireless broadband service. We should not stand in their way.

With our nationwide high school drop-out rates at unacceptable levels, I ask that you consider the thousands of young people who will be better positioned to meet the future demands and challenges in the workforce with access to this vital technology. The promise of high-speed broadband access that will result from this merger is too important to the future of our nation's youth, and thus I respectfully request that you approve this transaction.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Mary D Boehm". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mary" and last name "Boehm" clearly legible.

Mary Boehm

President, A+ College Ready